

ADVOCATES

2008 Annual Professional Development Day and Awards Ceremony

Lisa S. Vosburgh, Editor

On Friday April 25, 2008 over 100 Review Board staff, volunteers, and community partners came together for a day of professional development and awards celebration. Following are some of the highlights from the day.

Dr. Kathleen Hayes, State Director of SCDSS, began the day by sharing her vision for "Moving Forward for Children of South Carolina." Dr. Hayes was motivating and inspiring, fielding questions and comments from the audience.

Second Circuit Solicitor **Barbara Morgan** and SCDSS Attorneys **Dennis Gmerek** and **Amanda Whittle** presented information on their implementation of the SC Court Coordination Protocol in Aiken County.

Millie Qualls, SC Heart Gallery Coordinator, presented an update on the Heart Gallery in South Carolina. Ms. Qualls shared an emotional and moving video featuring South Carolina children photographed for the Heart Gallery. Also present was **Grace Wepner**, Miss Columbia 2008. Grace has served as a spokesperson for the SC Heart Gallery,

and has promoted adoption and the SC Heart Gallery during her reign as Miss Columbia. For the Miss South Carolina pageant in July 2008, Grace published Heart Gallery photos in the pageant program book, reaching many people who wouldn't otherwise know of the need for adoptive homes for children in foster care.

Rachel Silver of Review Board 5C was recognized as the 2007 Review Board Member of the Year. **Richland County Review Boards 5B, 5C, and 5D** were jointly recognized as Review Boards of the Year for their implementation of a child care program for Richland County Foster Parent Association meetings. Presentations were made by Senator Joel Lourie and all members received special commendations from both the SC Senate and SC House of Representatives.

Robert Qualls was presented with a Child Advocate Award for his work and contributions to the SC Heart Gallery website.

South Carolina
Governor's Office
Children's Foster
Care Review Board

Mark Sanford, Governor

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Permanency Through Action

Mission Statement

The Foster Care Review Program provides an external system of accountability and advocacy for children and families involved with the foster care system. The Division utilizes panels of community volunteers to promote safe, permanent homes for children in foster care in a timely manner and to increase public awareness regarding the impact of child abuse and neglect.

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Directly Speaking ... Details from Denise

By Denise T. Barker, Executive Director

“Kasserian ingera” (And how are the children?)

Response: “Sapati ingera” (All the children are well.)

Traditional Maasai greeting

I recently learned that the United States could learn a valuable lesson from the Maasai people of East Africa. When the Maasai meet one another, the quote stated above is their greeting. Why? Because the Maasai people know that if their children are well, the society in which they live will prosper. The United States is one of the wealthiest countries in the world, but our children still remain far behind other less prosperous countries in terms of basic security and well-being. The most vulnerable of our children come into foster care and their odds for success are even lower. The annual Kids Count data released in June supports this continually dismal picture on the state of our children and South Carolina’s ranking on the Kids Count measures are among the lowest in the country. Our response to this Maasai greeting would have to be, “Not so good.” We are going to have to start caring more, talking louder and getting out of our comfort zones to advocate for something new if we want that response to change.

What gives me hope? In May, I attended my first National Convening on Youth Permanence sponsored by Casey Family Services and Casey Family Programs. At the opening plenary session, all those in leadership positions at Casey stood before the group of nearly 700 participants and talked about **PERMANENCY**. Yes, the “P” word was the main topic of the whole Convening! I felt personally empowered, professionally vindicated and thoroughly assured that everything I have preached, trained and spouted over the past 28 years was correct! These great speeches were followed by a panel of extraordinary young adults who had spent time in the foster care system and are now involved with Casey. These young people told their stories, speaking to their need for connections to adults who cared for them and the importance of sustained

relationships with brothers and sisters at every turn in their paths. How these connections made them whole and helped heal the many wounds inflicted on them by the system was inspiring. They confirmed once and for all for me that children need families.

The National Foster Care Review Coalition had been asked by Casey to conduct a workshop at the Convening. I, along with my NFCRC colleagues from Delaware and Colorado did a presentation entitled *Trends and Opportunities in Youth Permanence: Foster Care Review*. Our workshop was well-attended and very well received. We fielded many questions about how foster care review works in our various states, what review programs bring to the table for our children, and how review board data can be used by our many partners in the child welfare system to identify systemic trends and barriers to permanence. Those most interested in what we had to say were participants from other child advocacy groups, judges, and even a state legislator! It was a thoroughly positive experience and I wish every single Review Board volunteer and staff member could have been with me to hear it all.

For me, participation in the Convening validated my career with foster care review - how awesome. My response to the Maasai question might still be “Not so good, but we are going to stay on the right track and make things better.” The reality is that we must work harder and faster – each child we touch should not be kept waiting for us to get it right.

Let’s hurry.

Strictly by the Board

News from the State Board of Directors

By Sissy Brock, Chairperson, State Board of Directors

Effective July 1, 2008, the leadership responsibilities on our State Board of Directors have changed. Our long-time chairperson, Vernon McCurry, passed this important gavel over to me at our meeting held July 18, 2008. I recognize that I have quite a leadership tradition to follow, but I know that with the help of my fellow Board members I will be up to the task.

I have been active on the State Board since my appointment in June 2004, and I have been a local board member in Cherokee County since my original appointment in September 1999. As a retired middle school teacher, I see my work on the Review Board as a continuation of my “child focused” career. The work we do must come from our hearts and I certainly see that reflected in so many of you I have already had the pleasure of working with on Review Board issues.

Thank you all for the time and commitment you bring to this program. I look forward to continuing our many good works on behalf of South Carolina’s children in foster care.

State Board Members

Martha (“Sissy”) Brock, 5th Congressional District, Chairperson (local review board 7B)

Vacant, 1st Congressional District

Jo Hecker, 2nd Congressional District (local review board 5B)

Vacant, 3rd Congressional District

Vacant, 4th Congressional District

Vacant, 6th Congressional District

Vernon McCurry, Member at-Large (local review board 13C)

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BECOMING A REVIEW BOARD VOLUNTEER?

- ♦ You need to be at least 18 years of age and able to commit to spending one day per month reviewing cases. You will be asked to work with others in the child welfare system to bring about positive change for foster children.
 - ♦ Each review board member is appointed by the Governor, upon the recommendation of legislative delegations, and is required to reside in the judicial district of the review board of which he or she is a member.
 - ♦ For more information, please call the Governor’s Office Foster Care Review Program at 803-734-0480, or contact your local legislative delegation.
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Correction: Recognition of Perfect Attendance



The following Foster Care Review Board volunteers were not recognized for their perfect attendance at local review board meetings at the 2008 Annual Professional Development Day and Awards Ceremony on April 25th in Columbia. **Linda Cecil** of Review Board 14B, **Ollie Ferrell** of Review Board 14B, and **Faye Wideman** of Review Board 10C all **had perfect attendance in both 2007 AND 2006**.

Review Board staff apologizes for this error on our part. Please know that your hard work on behalf of children and your community is greatly appreciated.

Developing a National Voice

National Foster Care Review Coalition
Speaking together for children in foster care

By Denise T. Barker, Executive Director

The following data is provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The primary mission of the Foundation is to foster public policies, human-service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families.

If Nothing Changes in the United States Between 2005 and 2020:

- ♦ 22,500 children will die from child abuse and neglect.
- ♦ Nearly 14 million children will be confirmed as victims of abuse or neglect.
- ♦ 9 million more children will experience foster care
- ♦ 300,000 youth will age out of foster care, most with inadequate support to build successful adult lives.

At the national level, corporations, the philanthropic community, service organizations and government agencies all have a role to play in ensuring that every child in the United States has a safe, healthy family. Alone, no organization can achieve this vision. All of our futures are inextricably linked to what we do for our most vulnerable children. Working together, we can make the success of America's children our number one priority. – Casey Family Programs

"The four basic needs used by the Red Cross to help people in times of emergency are: food, medical care, shelter and family connections. The foster care system has done well with providing three of these (but not the fourth). Neighbors, friends, family, long-lasting relationships are still a basic need we aren't meeting." "We look at SERVICES as solutions to the problems with youth in foster care, but we need to change our focus and look at RELATIONSHIPS as the true solutions."

Kevin Campbell, youth permanency expert

Children's Foster Care Review Board Program Staff

Executive Director	Denise T. Barker	dbarker@oepp.sc.gov
Program Director	Beth M. Green	bgreen@oepp.sc.gov
Program Supervisors	Robin C. Campbell	rcampbell@oepp.sc.gov
	Stephen C. Clyburn	sclyburn@oepp.sc.gov
Heart Gallery Coordinator	Millie Qualls	mqualls@oepp.sc.gov
Review Board Coordinators	Karen Airasian	kairasian@oepp.sc.gov
	Kathryn Bozik	kbozik@oepp.sc.gov
	Elizabeth Codega	ecodega@oepp.sc.gov
	Mark Collins	mcollins@oepp.sc.gov
	Emily Dixon	edixon@oepp.sc.gov
	Shirel Frazier	sfrazier@oepp.sc.gov
	Vacant	
	Anne Maertens	amaertens@oepp.sc.gov
	Stephanie Spink	sspink@oepp.sc.gov
	Michelle White	mwhite@oepp.sc.gov
General Counsel	Michelle Dhunjishah	mdhunjishah@oepp.sc.gov
Staff Attorney	Shannon A. Wiley	swiley@oepp.sc.gov
Research/Data Manager	Lisa S. Vosburgh	lvosburgh@oepp.sc.gov
Business Manager	Felicia Lorick	florick@oepp.sc.gov
Administrative Assistants	DeLisa Denoma	ddenoma@oepp.sc.gov
	Heather Valentine	hvalentine@oepp.sc.gov

Committed to Kids! Smiling New Faces

Review Board New Member Orientation was held on February 25, 2008 for thirteen new local review board members and one new staff member. Orientation was held on May 19, 2008 for four new local review board members and one new staff member. Orientation was also held on August 25, 2008 for five new local review board members and three new staff members.

Orientation training is mandatory for all incoming board members and is offered at least four times each year. If you have review board members who have not completed this training, please encourage their attendance. Volunteer GALS and Guardian ad Litem staff are also welcome to attend. Please call (803) 734-0480 to reserve a space. The next **New Member Orientation will be held on Monday, October 20, 2008.**



February 25, 2008: Standing: Carolyn Wallace (4A), Vicki Fowler (4A), Sue Summer (8A), Charles Butler (5D), Paul Manly (7A), Jill McDonald, (10C), and Felicia Lorick, RB Business Manager.

Seated: Dorothy Floyd (15C), Barbara Weston (5D), Mary Robinson (9F), Jerry Craig (9C), Ione Dwyer (3B), and Carole Babb (11B).

Not Pictured: Beverly Ingram (11A)



August 25, 2008: Standing: Susan Turner (13D), Stephanie Easterling (9B), Burnet Mendlesohn (9D), David Epperson (3A).

Seated: Kate Bozik, RB Coordinator, Heather Valentine, RB Admin. Assistant, and Zina Brown (10A).



May 19, 2008: Emily Dixon, RB Coordinator, Scott Stephens (13C), Najiyah Bey (1A), Robert Blair (9A), and Nancy Shows (1B).

Adoptions Day Held in Sumter County

By Michelle Dhunjishah, General Counsel, and Shannon A. Wiley, Staff Attorney

On May 27, 2008, **Judge George M. McFaddin, Jr.** held court during chambers week for the exclusive purpose of hearing adoption cases. Adoptions for thirteen children were finalized, twelve of whom had been in foster care. The children ranged in ages from one year to seventeen years old; five of the children were thirteen years old or older. Although Judge McFaddin held court in Sumter, he heard cases from several other counties as well.

We had the joy of attending court to observe the adoption hearings and the happiness that these families were experiencing. Seeing the smiles on the faces of the children reminded us of the reason why we do this work.

Judge McFaddin and his staff (especially his assistant, **Andrea Morris**, who put together gift bags for each child), DSS representatives, attorneys, Guardians ad Litem and Sumter County court officials worked together to make this day a success. This special day demonstrated how a small group of people working together can make a big impact in the lives of children. Judge McFaddin intends to hold another Adoptions Day in November.



South Carolina Heart Gallery

By Millie Qualls Heart Gallery Coordinator



I am happy to announce that in July 2008, the South Carolina Heart Gallery became a joint program of the Children's Foster Care Review Board and the South Carolina Department of Social Services! This innovative partnership allows the Heart Gallery to expand and further enhance adoption recruitment for children in foster care who are legally free and waiting for adoption. We are already seeing positive results of this partnership, and must thank all of you for your participation and support.

Through the combined efforts of Review Board staff and volunteers, DSS staff and regional adoption recruiters, and community partners, Heart Gallery portraits have been displayed in more than 30 venues already this calendar year, with many more to come. Local media outlets have covered exhibits and photo shoots, and SCETV has a project in the works featuring the Heart Gallery!

Our website receives hundreds of visitors each day and responds to at least five inquiries per week from families interested in adopting. Forty children have adoptive families identified and we hope to hear of more placements in the coming months.

Although there are so many of you to thank that I'm sure I'll miss someone, I want to share a few highlights:

Review Board volunteers attending the March 28, 2008 photo shoot at Boone Hall in Charleston included **Maryann Riley**, **Zora Massing**, and **Bill Bond** of 7C as well as **Kathleen Bounds** of 9E. Thanks also to Kathleen and **Rosetta Givens-Mitchell** of 9B for donating snacks for the children.

In June at Timrod Park in Florence, **Diane Rieg** (4B) and **Susie Bennett** (12A) attended the photo shoot. Diane and Susie, as well as **Missy Coker** (12A), **Linda Godfrey** (12B), and **Zora Massing** (7C) provided donations to cover a pizza lunch, which the children certainly enjoyed. Thanks also to Review Board staff members **Robin Campbell** and **Elizabeth Codega** for their help.

The July 31, 2008 shoot was held at Greenville Zoo, and welcomed **Ron Rossi** and **Beth Humphries** of 13B, as well as **Jane Daniel** (13C). **Scott Stephens** (13C) donated lunches for the children, and **Beth Humphries** provided funds to cover lunch for the photographers. Review Board staff member **Anne Maertens** joined in the fun.

On August 14, 2008, children enjoyed having their photos made at Riverbanks Zoo in Columbia. **Maryann Riley** and **Zora Massing** of 7C were on hand and did a fabulous job, as usual, of managing the food and snack distribution! Also assisting were Review Board staff members **Denise Barker**,



Volunteers Maryann Riley, and Zora Massing, RB 7C



ETV Gathering Footage at the August 14th HG Shoot

Kate Bozik, **Mark Collins**, **Michelle Dhunjishah**, and **Emily Dixon**.

Maryann Riley (7C) donated a case of small photo albums that will be provided to the children, filled with their Heart Gallery photos and extra shots from the photo sessions. **Scott Stephens** (13C) and **Heather Purtle** (13D) offered their respective businesses in Greenville as exhibit space for future venues.

We are blessed to have such energetic and generous Review Board volunteers and staff, as well as dedicated photographers who donate their services. Please visit our website at: www.sheartgallery.org to see the children's photos and information regarding upcoming events.

South Carolina Heart Gallery

(continued from page 7)

SC Heart Gallery congratulates Grace Wepner, Miss Columbia 2008!

Many of you may remember meeting Grace at the 2008 Professional Development Day in April. Grace has served as a spokesperson for the SC Heart Gallery, and has promoted adoption and the Heart Gallery during her reign as Miss Columbia. In the Miss South Carolina pageant in July 2008, Grace won three preliminary events and was named first runner up and overall swimsuit winner! Grace had the wonderful idea to publish 52 (65 children) Heart Gallery photos in the pageant program book, reaching many people who wouldn't otherwise know of the need for adoptive homes for children in foster care. Thanks to members of Review Board 6A for sponsoring a page! We also thank Grace for participating in numerous photo shoots and media appearances.



Review Board Round-up

- ♦ **Review Board 2A:** In April board members donated over 40 tote bags to Aiken County DSS that included hygiene and personal items to give to children upon their initial entry into foster care. Edith Ridling also donated \$100 to a family who had taken in children of relatives but had not yet accessed services from DSS. *Karen Airasian*
- ♦ **Review Board 2B:** Board members put together school "gift bags" for the children who reside at Helping Hands Shelter in Aiken. The bags included crayons, notebooks, book bags, paper, pencils, erasers, and other school supplies. *Karen Airasian*
- ♦ **Review Board 3A:** Board members are hosting bi-monthly birthday parties for the foster children in Clarendon and Williamsburg counties. The parties are complete with birthday cake, ice cream and a personalized birthday card with a gift certificate to Wal-Mart for each child. The project is in conjunction with a local women's group, a church circle group and the Clarendon County Guardian ad Litem program. The first party was held in June at the Clarendon County DSS Office; they hope to alternate locations and have the parties in Williamsburg County quarterly. Other local groups have indicated their interest in helping sponsor and fund the project. The Review Board is excited about the opportunity to help the children celebrate their birthdays! *Emily Dixon*
- ♦ **Review Board 7B:** Board member Sissy Brock assisted with the Foster Care Month and Prevent

Child Abuse Month activities sponsored by DSS and the GAL program. Board members have also attended partners' meetings and attended several court cases to advocate for permanency. *Stephanie Spink*

- ♦ **Review Board 7C:** Board member Maryann Riley has been a busy bee. She noticed a Dollar and More Store going out of business here in Spartanburg and has been buying up things as they go on sale. She sent 70 photo albums to Columbia for the Heart Gallery kids. She has also been buying books, toys, baby things, baby washing things, coloring stuff, and other supplies. When she noticed a special closing sale sign that said "First \$20 free!", she and board member Zora Massing took advantage of the savings and bought more. Most of these things will be donated to the Foster Parent Association in Spartanburg, or DSS. The school items are for our project in providing supplies for foster children. *Monica Hill, Review Board Member*
- ♦ **Review Board 9A:** Board members continue to award a Charleston County DSS caseworker monthly with a \$10 gift card. *Michelle White*
- ♦ **Review Board 9C:** Board members donated \$1,000 to HALOS to send foster children to summer camp and to help purchase school supplies for the upcoming school year. *Michelle White*

Review Board Round-up (continued) from page 8)

- ♦ **Review Boards 9B and 9E:** Due to the generosity of these board members, a 15 year old is being sent to a YMCA summer camp in Berkeley County. This is the 2nd consecutive summer this young man has been able to attend camp through funds from the Foster Care Restricted Fund. This fund has also enabled Berkeley DSS to purchase McDonald's gift cards for case managers to use when they transport children to appointments when they may have missed their school lunch. *Karen Airasian*
- ♦ **Review Boards 9A, 9C, 9D, and 9F:** Jointly, these boards contributed funds to help a foster child get contact lenses so that he can play football. *Mark Collins*
- ♦ **Review Board 9F:** Board member Mary Robinson donated \$300 to send a 12 year old foster child to summer camp. *Mark Collins*
- ♦ **Review Board 10B:** Board members have been attending community partners' meetings. Several board members also attended court hearings to advocate for permanency. The Board also sponsored a booth for the Heart Gallery at the Anderson County Civic Center Home Show in February. Board Members paid for babysitting services at the Foster Parent Banquet. Carolyn Pinson coordinated with board members and her church's women's organization to raise \$500 for the Anderson FPA. *Stephanie Spink*
- ♦ **Review Board 10C:** During Foster Care Month board members Jill McDonald and Robin Cromer gave a very lively presentation to their church about the Review Board, the Heart Gallery, and foster care. In addition, Jill McDonald solicited donated items for the Board's annual "Buckets of Fun" project for foster care youth six and younger. Several individuals, businesses, and organizations donated sand pails with shovels, boxes of sidewalk chalk, kids meal gift certificates, coloring books, books, monetary gifts, and goodie bags filled with hygiene items. The buckets will be distributed to foster parents and their foster youth. *Stephanie Spink*
- ♦ **Review Board 12B:** Board members coordinated with the Marion County Foster Parent Association, the Guardian ad Litem Program, and

DSS to help send foster children in Marion County to a fun-filled trip to Myrtle Beach in July. Board member Linda Godfrey donated money to purchase pizza for the Region IV Heart Gallery photo shoot in June. *Stephanie Spink*

- ♦ **Review Boards 13B and 13C:** Board members Ron Rossi (along with his wife), Beth Humphries, Jane Daniel, and Vernon McCurry assisted in the Heart Gallery photo shoot at the Greenville Zoo on July 31, 2008. Scott Stephens and his wife donated the lunches from their restaurant, Camille's Café, for the same photo shoot. Scott also donated his restaurant space for a Heart Gallery photo display. *Anne Maertens*

- ♦ **Review Boards 16A and 16B:** Board members have been working hard to get the Heart Gallery set up in York County. The Board has worked closely with its community partners in organizing this event. *Michelle White*



Review Board 3A Birthday Party



Review Board 10C "Buckets of Fun"

Foster Care Review News and Views: 2009 Annual Professional Development Day and Awards Ceremony

By Beth Green, Program Director

The Foster Care Review Board's Annual Professional Development and Awards Committee met on July 18, 2008, to review the evaluations from the 2008 Annual Professional Day and Awards Ceremony and to begin planning for 2009.

A total of 105 people attended the Professional Development Day and Awards Ceremony on April 25, 2008. On a scale of one to five, with five being the highest, 97% of the respondents gave an overall rating of four or higher. The Second Judicial Circuit's presentation of the South Carolina Court Coordination Protocol was the topic with the highest rating, followed by the South Gallery Heart Gallery. Numerous comments were provided, all of which were utilized by the Committee as they initiated planning for next year.

I am pleased to announce that **Friday, April 24, 2009** has been confirmed for the 2009 Annual Professional Development Day and Awards Ceremony. As the Committee members work to plan a day of learning, networking and fun, they hope that all Review Board members will set aside April 24th and plan to attend.

Review Board Staff News and Updates

We are happy to announce that **Kathryn (Kate) Bozik** and **Emily Dixon** have joined the Review Board staff. Kate is the Coordinator for Review Boards 1A, 4B, 5D and 6A. Kate is from upstate New York and graduated from Randolph-Macon Women's College. She was previously a high school English teacher. Emily is the Coordinator for Review Boards 3A, 4A, 5E and 15A. She graduated from Furman University and has worked for a major law firm and The Lynnwood Foundation.

The Review Board is happy to announce the addition of administrative assistant, **Heather Valentine**, who has been with us since the middle of June. Heather is married and is the proud mother of one son who is 14 months old. We welcome Heather and look forward to her service with the Foster Care Review Board for many years to come.



Observing Adoption Awareness Month (from the adoption.com website)

The first major effort to promote awareness of the need for adoptive families for children in the foster care system occurred in Massachusetts. In 1976, then-Governor Mike Dukakis proclaimed Adoption Week and the idea grew in popularity and spread throughout the nation. President Gerald Ford made the first National Adoption Week proclamation, and in 1990, the week was expanded to a month due to the number of states participating and the number of events. During the month, states, communities, public and private organizations, businesses, families, and individuals celebrate adoption as a positive way to build families. It also includes National Adoption Day, traditionally a Saturday, which is observed in courthouses across the nation as thousands of adoptions are finalized simultaneously.

Each year, November is recognized as National Adoption Awareness Month. While all adoption-related issues are important, the particular focus of this month is the adoption of children currently in foster care. Activities and celebrations are kicked off with a Presidential Proclamation, and while efforts made at the national level certainly help build awareness of adoption, participation in local programs, events, and activities by those of us with a direct connection to adoption can often be the most effective way to promote positive perceptions, debunk the myths, and draw attention to the tens of thousands of children in foster care who wait and hope for permanent families.

Visit <http://national-adoption-month.adoption.com> for **30 Days of Ideas** to celebrate National Adoption Awareness Month with a new activity every day.

Foster Facts: The Road to Permanence

By Lisa S. Vosburgh, Data and Research Manager

“If you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there.”

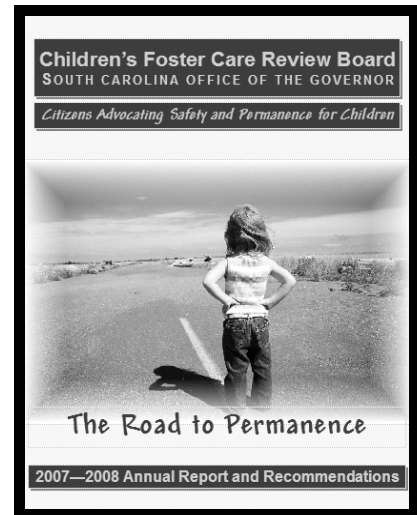
**Lewis Carroll
1832-1898**

The 2007-2008 SC Children’s Foster Care Annual Report has been completed and is on the way to the printers. The final report will be distributed by mail and will also be available on our website (www.oepp.sc.gov/fcrb) by October 1, 2008.

This year’s report includes a county comparison of major data elements. Since 2006:

- ♦ The number of volunteer hours donated by review board members increased over 20%.
- ♦ The number of review board meetings, reviews held, and children reviewed all increased by nearly 10%.
- ♦ 14% more children entered foster care.
- ♦ The number of finalized adoptions within 24 months increased slightly.

Looking forward to the future of the child welfare system in South Carolina, the State Board of Director’s Recommendations include increasing awareness of the need for safe, permanent homes in a timely manner for children in foster care; enhanced communication with the judiciary; identifying and recruiting child advocates with the South Carolina legislature; and full implementation of the South Carolina Heart Gallery.



Legal Lines: Legislative Update

By Michelle Dhunjishah, General Counsel

The 117th Legislative Session adjourned in June and any bills pending or still in committee “died” as 2008 was the final year of the two-year session. The following bills of interest were passed and signed into law by the Governor:

■ Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children established (Senate Bill 1011)

This committee will study issues related to children and will consist of three members of the House of Representatives, three members of the Senate, and three citizens appointed by the Governor. The directors of the Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Social Services, Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, Department of Mental Health and the superintendent of the Department of Education, will serve as ex officio, nonvoting members of the committee. The Children’s Law Center will serve as staff to this committee. The committee’s first report is due in February 2009 and the committee will terminate in December 2015.

■ Children’s Code moved to Title 63 (House Bill 4747)

This legislation reorganizes Chapter 7, Title 20 into new Title 63. This change does not impact any substantive law, but does make it necessary for lawyers to learn new statutory citations!

South Carolina Governor's Office Children's Foster Care Review Board

1205 Pendleton St., Room 436
Columbia, SC 29201

Visit us on the Web:
www.oepp.sc.gov/fcrb

Phone: 803-734-0480
Fax: 803-734-1223
Email: lvosburgh@oepp.sc.gov

Review Board Calendar

New Member Orientation	Mon Oct 20	10:00 am - 3:00 pm Edgar Brown Building
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State Board of Directors	Fri Oct 24	Edgar Brown Building Columbia
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November is National Adoption Awareness Month

Veteran's Day	Tues Nov 11	State Offices Closed
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Thanksgiving	Thurs Nov 27	State Offices Closed
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Day after Thanksgiving	Fri Nov 28	State Offices Closed
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Christmas Day	Thurs Dec 25	State Offices Closed
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Day after Christmas	Fri Dec 26	State Offices Closed
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State Board of Directors	Fri Jan 23	Edgar Brown Building Columbia
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All locations in Columbia, unless otherwise noted; times subject to change.
Submissions are welcome; please direct them to the editor.

Advocates is published semi-annually by the South Carolina Governor's Office. The deadline for submission of articles for the next issue of *Advocates* (Winter 2009) is January 16, 2009.

Anyone wishing to submit an article should contact *Advocates* editor Lisa Vosburgh. Call 803-734-0474, or send an e-mail to lvosburgh@oepp.sc.gov.

The publisher reserves the right to make the final determination as to the content of each issue. Articles submitted are subject to editing and are not guaranteed inclusion.

NOTICE:
**If you no longer wish to receive
this publication, please notify
us in writing by
January 9, 2009.**